

Interview with Howard Walker
in Eastham, Massachusetts

Interview #1
Tales of Cape
Cod, Inc.
March 7, 1978

Q: Today I am visiting with Howard Walker of Eastham, Massachusetts. And what was the date of your birth Mr. Walker?

Mr. Walker: I was born the fifth of April 1906.

Q: And where were you born?

Mr. Walker: I was born in Eastham in the old Walker homestead.

Q: Can you tell me about the old Walker Homestead?

Mr. Walker: I remember it mostly in the wintertime. It was so cold, the old stoves. We would sit around the gas burner at night and play games or read books or something to keep warm. Practically sit on the stove.

Q: Why did you have a gas burner at night?

Mr. Walker: We'd call it a gas burner, but they were coal stoves. More like just a tin barrel packed with---

it could get really red hot. The drafts---the houses weren't insulated, they were really cold in winter.

Q: Why would you burn coal at night? For what reason?

Mr. Walker: We'd burn coal in what we called the old gas burner stove. The kitchen stove was just a wood burning stove.

Q: How old was the homestead?

Mr. Walker: As far as I know, right now it is probably 200 years old.

Q: Was it built by your great grandfather?

Mr. Walker: I don't know. I don't know who built it or when it was built, but I understood that it was then moved from down back where it is located now. It's been claimed the old Stage Coach Road. It used to go down along the hill in back of the house. The house was moved at some point down back, but I don't know what year it was

Q: Was the main road always there?

Mr. Walker: When I was born, the road, was out in front of the house always. I understood that the old Stage Coach Road was down in back.

Q: What are your earliest childhood memories?

Mr. Walker: Well I suppose it was when I was---my father was on the---captain of Nauset Coast Guard, Nauset Lifesaving Station.

Q: What was his name?

Mr. Walker: Abbott. Abbott Walker. And I would spend all of my nights during the summer down there and the crew to the station was home on vacation two months of the summer. My father had to be at the station from sunset till sunrise every night and he'd go back and forth by horse and wagon, which was about a four or five mile ride. He'd go down every night, stay the night and come back every morning.

Q: You? Your father? Who went with you?

Mr. Walker: Just my father, my mother, and myself. The rest of my brothers and sisters were all away from home and were working out at different places then.

Q: What was it like, being at the lighthouse?

Mr. Walker: Well it was very quiet from what it is today. Some days there wouldn't be a---you wouldn't see a person down around the beach at all. Of course it's--the population wasn't anything like it is today. You knew everyone. Everyone you met on the road you knew, and you stopped and you talked with them.

Q: What would you talk about?

Mr. Walker: Just---I can't say just what, but you'd pass the time of day. They'd see you coming and they'd come out to the edge of the road and you'd stop and talk to them. Course everyone knew everyone--seemed so--everyone in the town.

Q: So how did you spend your early evenings at the lighthouse?

Mr. Walker: Well, all I can remember, you would amuse yourself the best you could. Course I'd play out beyond the beach, walk the beach things that had floated to shore, you could always find lumber, different fish. And I would spend most of my daylight hours on the beach.

Q: How old were you then?

Mr. Walker: As I remember, I was about six. Six or seven years old. Then I started school, I used to walk Stacey to the school in the morning. There was no buses or barges in those days. Everyone walked when they wanted to go somewhere.

Q: And could you describe the inside of the station?

Mr. Walker: The inside of the station was---well you might call it men's quarters. There was no curtains, no

cloth on the kitchen table, the dining room table, and of course it was strictly men that lived there and one man would be the cook. The station as I remember it was practically all the woodwork was varnished. It was kept clean, very clean. The second floor would be all one big room where all the cots were around, where the men slept at night.

Q: What kind of cooking stove did you have there?

Mr. Walker: It was a very large range-type stove and a water tank goes out of the back of it, where there would be ten or twelve gallons of water which was always hot, it was the only way of getting hot water. Cistern, large, what we call a large cook stove.

Q: How did you get your water supply?

Mr. Walker: I believe that the drinking water came from a driven well situated in the outbuilding and then there was a cistern around the station in case of fire or anything like that. They kept that filled from the rain water from the roof.

Q: What is a cistern?

Mr. Walker: A cistern is a big hole dug in the ground and bricked up, cement coated. It will probably hold, oh, about a thousand gallons of water. And all the drain spouts

from the roofs run into this to keep it filled with water. Like a big tank underground.

Q: How did you get the water out of the cistern?

Mr. Walker: It was pumped out with a hand pump.

Q: You originally had a boat house?

Mr. Walker: The lifeboats were kept in the big room. The boat was kept on a trailer, which had very wide wheels so that they could pull it through the soft beach sand. Then they had the apparatus cart that carried the Breech's Bouy and The Lyle gun that shot the rope onto the ship that was in distress so that we could rig the Breech's Bouy and bring the members off the ship to shore. All the equipment that we needed was carried in that extra cart and it was all drawn by one horse, the men helping out pushing and pulling.

Q: Did it often get stuck?

Mr. Walker: No, not unless they had a very bad storm and the tide was high. Then they would have to go over land up on top of the banks but usually they could pull it along the beach.

Q: Do you remember any rescues they might have handled?

Mr. Walker: I was never around when there was any rescue that was serious at all happened. I was too young, I guess, to have been there.

Q: What was family life like when you were very small? What time did the family get up in the morning?

Mr. Walker: Oh, we got up early and of course Mother was always very busy. And then we had no washing machines. You had to do all your hand washing in tubs of water. There was always the baking of cakes, pies, fresh donuts. There was always plenty to eat.

Q: Did she bake all of these things?

Mr. Walker: She did all of her own baking. As I remember back now, it seems though that she must have been busy every minute. Course, my mother practically brought me up, because my father was only home once a week. We had our duties to do. We had certain jobs we had to do every day.

Q: What chores did you have as a boy?

Mr. Walker: We always had to have the wood box kept filled. My father would cut the wood and saw it, and we'd have to---I'd have to split the wood, most of it, 'cept when he was home.

Q: How old were you when you had to do this?

Mr. Walker: Oh, I don't remember. I think people enjoyed doing those things then. (LAUGHTER) Seems as though when I was able to swing an ax, I would start. And then we had a cow which was milked night and morning. And hens, chickens.

Q: Did you have to milk the cow?

Mr. Walker: I milked the cow.

Q: How long did that take?

Mr. Walker: That would probably take ten or fifteen minutes. No longer than we had to spend with it.

Q: How much milk would you get?

Mr. Walker: If the cow was fresh, the we'd get about ten to twelve quarts. That was used by---at home. Then we sold what extra we had around to the neighborhood. That was one job that I never liked. The cow was always there to be milked no matter what happened.

Q: Did your father always work at the life station?

Mr. Walker: Yes. He was on there for around thirty years.

Q: Well, how much time would he have at home during the summer, or vacation time?

Mr. Walker: They had liberty once a week and---well their turn came around about every eight days, I believe, but I don't remember how much time he had that you'd call vacation time. Doesn't seem as though it could have been more than a week at a time that he was home.

Q: How would he spend that day each week?

Mr. Walker: Oh, he'd do the things that were necessary to be done around the place and he would take me and we would go down to the Cove and go quahogging, clamming, anything that he would like to do.

Q: How far was your home from the station?

Mr. Walker: I think that we lived about between four and five miles from the station.

Q: And how was your father able to get back and forth to work?

Mr. Walker: All the transportation was with the old horse, horse and wagon.

Q: Did he usually go by horse and wagon, instead of riding the horse?

Mr. Walker: Yes. No, I never knew him to ride the horse. The horse was really a large horse anyway. They had to be to do the work that they had to do.

Q: Well, what was life like without a father around the house?

Mr. Walker: Well, I didn't seem to think much about it because I never had had any at home all the time. Sometimes I'd spend my time down at the station without my mother and that was always a big thrill to be down with him. I had always figured that they were big strong, husky heroes, that they were protecting the coastline. We thought that we were quite grown up to do that.

Q: What was a typical breakfast like?

Mr. Walker: What I can remember was having oatmeal, Cream of Wheat. Vourse we never had any refrigeration, so you had to have condensed milk on it, which was--as a kid it was very good. Today it wouldn't be. And any perishable food was put down in what we called the cellar of the building. That was always cooler. That was the only way you kept your butter and such things as that.

Q: What kind of a cellar did you have?

Mr. Walker: Just what they call an earthen cellar. It was a hole underneath the house, rock-lined with a dirt floor was where all the vegetables were kept in the winter. It was always cool in there, so that is where you would keep all the perishables. The only way to get to it was through the trap door in the floor and you go down the stairs underground.

Q: And what else did you keep there besides butter and vegetables?

Mr. Walker: Well all the preserves. Mother would do an awful lot of preserving during the summer. Blueberries, beach plums, anything, all the vegetables out of the garden. They would all be processed in jars and be put down in the basement. Anyone who had a basement full of preserves in the winter was like a farmer.

Q: Did you often have a big breakfast?

Mr. Walker: Well, breakfast in those days was-- anything left over from the night before was served in the morning. If you'd had steak, you had what was left in the morning, along with the cereals and the apple pie, mince pie. Always a good hearty meal.

Q: You always dessert too at breakfast?

Mr. Walker: Yes, there was always desserts. Some kind of

a pudding or cake. Seems as though we ate very well.

Q: What did you do for entertainment when you were young?

Mr. Walker: We made our own entertainment because there was nothing was ever---the older people never did anything to---like they do today---they left it up to the children to get together in the neighborhood and make their own good times. We used to---in the summertime we swam a lot and we went out in boats, rowboats. There wasn't such a thing as an outboard motor. And we would play at that. The wintertime we were skating all the time and sliding down hill. Making, building kites and---

Q: How did you build a kite?

Mr. Walker: Found some sticks and covered them with news paper and paste. We never thought of buying a kite. Always made a kite, to see who could make the largest one. And then we made bows and arrows out of the cedar rail fences. Get the cedar and make bows and the arrows. Nothing was bought.

Q: How did you get your arrows?

Mr. Walker: They were made from a jackknife and cedar. Whittled them out.

Q: They were wood? Would you actually use these for any purposes?

Mr. Walker: No. Just to play. We always amused ourselves very much. We'd just go swimming in the summertime. We'd probably go in the water about six times a day. Then come out and play games. There was usually about six or eight of us. Mostly boys that played together.

Q: Did you have movies?

Mr. Walker: We never went to the movies until---Oh, I was probably ten or twelve years old before I went to my first movie.

Q: Do you remember your first movie?

Mr. Walker: No, I don't. I know those days they used to run serials that continued every week and they used to be very---come to the crisis and they would stop---TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK---they always had a lot of those.

Q: What kind of music did you like?

Mr. Walker: Music at the movie house would be a lady playing the piano. She played the piano according to what was showing on the screen. She played it soft, loud.

Q: How much did it cost to get into the movies?

Mr. Walker: I don't think that the fee then to get into the movies was more than fifteen cents, twenty-five at the most. That was held in the old Snow block in Orleans. They had quite a large hall upstairs, where they used to have the roller skating. That was just about, the first was about 1900, I believe. The Roller skating rink was there. That was about the only recreation there was in town.

Q: How did you get to Orleans from Eastham?

Mr. Walker: We walked. Every where we went we walked. We never thought anything about it. I had my first bicycle, I think, when I was twelve years old, and that was quite a treat. Before that, any where you wanted to go you walked and never thought anything about it.

Q: Did you have dances when you were younger?

Mr. Walker: There were quite a few dances when I was in school.

Q: What kind were they?

Mr. Walker: What kind of dances? Mostly, as I remember then, they were the waltz and the or fox trot. The high school seniors would have a dance for big times during the school year. Plus what we would call the high school play that the seniors put on. The play would earn

the money to go on the Washington trip. Outside of the dances and the church socials, that was about all that went on.

Q: Where would you hold the dances?

Mr. Walker: The dances were held at what was the Orleans Town Hall and which is now the Arena Theatre.

Q: Can you remember what Eastham was like when you were young? The businesses that might have been there? Stores?

Mr. Walker: Well, Eastham was--as far as the stores went, there were very few stores, I think there was only one store down in North Eastham. It was Samuel Brackett's Store.

Q: What kind of store was it?

Mr. Walker: That was a general store and they sold most anything you could think of. There was a delivery wagon that came around every two or three days, which Mr. George Wiley used to run and take the orders. Take the orders one day and deliver them, I think about, two days after that. They sold anything that was needed, you could buy from the cart. Cause you didn't go to the stores yourself very often.

Q: What---you said he sold everything?

Mr. Walker: Well, he would sell anything from kerosene to groceries and clothing, shoes, the old leather topped shoes, most anything. They had to carry everything because people depended on---depended that you had to buy things right in one store.

Q: Well how would they get the right size of shirt to fit them?

Mr. Walker: Um, I don't know. (LAUGHTER) I don't know. I guess you kept trying them on til they fit.

Q: What size was that wagon? How big was it?

Mr. Walker: It was just a covered wagon, not too large a wagon. Oh, it probably was eight feet long and about five feet wide. It was enclosed, like a today's van would be.

Q: Now, after he finished his route would his wagon be empty?

Mr. Walker: Yes. He started out with it pretty well filled up and by the time he returned to the store he was sold out, because everything had been ordered.

Q: And then he'd go take orders and fill up again and start again?

Mr. Walker: Yep. He'd take orders one day and then

deliver the next. He'd make a round of probably twenty miles a day. Course then we had---everything was delivered--go around to the houses like that. The meat wagon, the fish wagon, the grocery wagon. Orders were taken and delivered the next day, or perhaps that afternoon.

Q: Where was the meat wagon from?

Mr. Walker: The meat wagon was from--Mr. Freeman Collins was the first one that I remember. And he had--a lot of his meat was from his own farm, where he butchered his own cattle. So the meat---that was over on Bridge Road. Then later it was Mr. William Chase and Byron Holmes that had the meat cart on the road.

Q: Do you remember the holidays when you were a young boy?

Mr. Walker: The only holidays that were really celebrated, I believe, were Thanksgiving and Christmas. They were big occasions, because the families all got together. I don't remember making much of any of the other days at all.

Q: What would a Christmas dinner consist of?

Mr. Walker: We usually--on Christmas we would have--we had our own fowl. We had roosters roasted and then we would have a wild game. Black duck, two or three of those. All the fixin's, which back then practically

everything was raised from your own garden. A regular feast. That would be it. You had turkey. You'd never get it again during the year, you know. You only had it that one day, Christmas day was the only time you'd ever have turkey.

Q: Did you have Christmas trees?

Mr. Walker: Yes, we had the trees.

Q: You hung your stocking?

Mr. Walker: Hung our stockings. Decorated our own trees with---we'd pop popcorn and string popcorn for decorations, string cranberries for decorations. Noone would think of buying tinsel or anything like that. (LAUGHTER) I don't even know if they made it in those days.

Q: What were some of the things you might have found in your stocking on Christmas morning?

Mr. Walker: Well, you didn't get an awful lot, I don't know, I know we always had a stocking, but I can't tell you what came in it. But for presents we'd get books, spinning tops, maybe some---

Q: Spinning tops?

Mr. Walker: Yes, I guess they still sell them today. You wind them with a string and then pull the string and

they spin on the floor. A few clothes and new games, that was about it. Not anything elaborate. All that was necessary really.

Q: Can you tell me about the first job you had?

Mr. Walker: I think my first job really would have been working out at the Knowles farm, I used to work there during the summer, working in the vegetable garden and helping the man that ran the farm getting in the hay. I believe that was my first real job. Then I spent a lot of time around the shore quahogging, clamming, which we could always pick up a few dollars that way. Everybody was working to make a little money.

Q: You mentioned that you delivered the mail to a writer on the beach. Could you tell me about that?

Mr. Walker: I was about seven or eight years old when I was down at the Coast---the Lifesaving Station in the summer. There was a man that was a writer had one of the cottages way down on the South Beach and I had the job of delivering mail to him every day or every second day. And that was about a four or five mile walk, which I did all summer long for the sum of ten dollars. I'd pick the mail up at the Post Office in Eastham which was down at the George Clark's store, which was right where the Eastham Railroad Station was. That was brought down

twice a day on the train. It came down at noon time and it came down on the evening train. You had to go to the Post Office. There was no deliveries, you had to pick it up yourself. That was another one of the activities at night, to go up to the Railroad Station to see the evening train come in. Course the mail was brought down on the train, and that was sorted at the post office and everyone would pick up their mail that arrived on the late train if they wanted to. So everyone would go to the depot to see the train come in.

Q: Was that a passenger train?

Mr. Walker: Yes, it was a passenger train.

Q: There were other trains too?

Mr. Walker: Yes. We had the noon train down and the evening train down, and the morning train back to Boston and the afternoon train back to Boston. So there were four trains going and coming everyday, plus the freight.

Q: What would be the other activities besides the mail coming in?

Mr. Walker: I guess that outside of that--after the train left there was no activity. It was just---

Q: How many cars were there on the train?

Mr. Walker: They would run about four cars, and there was quite a few people on them, you know. You had the parlor car, which was the luxury car, and then they had two or three passenger cars.

Q: What was the parlor car, can you describe it?

Mr. Walker: Well what we called the parlor car was where you had the real luxury seats, where you could lay back and enjoy the ride. It was almost a four hour trip to Boston on the train, because it stopped almost every two miles where there was a railroad station. That was the only way you ever got to Boston in those days. Or anywhere. If you wanted to go to Wellfleet from Eastham you took the train.

Q: Can you tell me about World War I? What was it like in Eastham?

Mr. Walker: I don't remember too much about the War. I know my neighbors went and I was graduated from Eastham in 1920. I think the Armistice was signed in 1918.

And that was the night that I was supposed to stay after school and we got word that the Armistice was signed and my teacher, Mr. Otto Nickerson, was the principal, he excused everyone that day from school and we all went down to the Methodist Church to ring the bell in the afternoon. It was a quite a big occasion. That night

there was a big bonfire in Orleans that everyone turned out to. I don't have too much recollection of the War, because I was quite young.

Q: Was there a lot of singing and happiness?

Mr. Walker: Oh yes, it was a big celebration.

Q: People---what were they doing, dancing or what were they doing?

Mr. Walker: No, they were mostly just celebrating around the town, everyone having a good time. I wasn't in either war. I missed it by age.

Q: Well, do you remember the Depression at all?

Mr. Walker: I was married in the Depression and was lucky enough to have a job which was bringing me in a weekly pay. But it was very hard times for a great many people, because money was very scarce. I was buying shellfish then for Mr. Collins and a good many days the men would come in with their day's work, which would amount to anywhere from seventy five cents to a dollar and a half to two dollars.

Q: Men brought the shellfish in to you?

Mr. Walker: Yes.

Q: And did they have boats?

Mr. Walker: Rowboats mostly. They would go out on the water and scratch around, and they would come in with whatever they got for the day's work, and we would buy them and what we didn't ship right away to Boston, then we would plant them on the shore in the Cove and keep them for whenever we did want them. The following year fill we'd the whole shoreline up with a quahog bed to use during the winter months. We were shipping--oh sometimes we'd ship ten, twenty, thirty barrels a day to Boston to market.

Q: What kind of shellfish are you speaking about?

Mr. Walker: Clams and quahogs and bay scallops. In season.

Q: What is "bull raking"?

Mr. Walker: Bull raking is raking out of a skiff with a big rake on the end of a pole, which could be anywhere from fifteen feet to thirty feet long in the deep water. You just work it through the bottom and up to the boat and lift it up and take what happened to be in it, what quahogs there are and whatever else happened to be on the bottom. It was a very back-breaking job, but after you've done it and got used to it, and know how to do it correctly, why, then it isn't so bad. It's a good way to make money today. Really hard, rugged work.

Q: Do you remember anything about Prohibition?

Mr. Walker: I was working for Mr. Collins during Prohibition and buying quahogs. I remember a lot went on I wasn't around, but the liquor would be dumped on the flats in Eastham and folks would get caught bringing it in and out and they would throw the load overboard. So most everybody in town had their fingers in the business. You'd find it floating around in the Bay. I actually was not in the works of it. Of course, the bootleggers came around and you could always buy all the liquor you wanted. Just ask for what kind you wanted and it was in their coat pocket, very handy to them.

Q: What kind of bootleg did they have?

Mr. Walker: Liquor? Most any kind.

Q: Were they brand names?

Mr. Walker: Yes. They had the Black and White Scotch and the Benedictine and the had Lincoln Inn, I don't know that's the brand name today, but it was good liquor. Some of it was pure alcohol, Haig and Haig, most any kind.

Q: Where did they get this liquor from?

Mr. Walker: Well, these boats would go off shore in the

night and meet the ships that were laying off shore and load up and then---

Q: What do you mean "laying off shore"?

Mr. Walker: Well, they would be laying outside of the twelve-mile limit. They could stay and be protected and the smaller boats, small fishing boats from the local ports, would run out to them and load up and then try to get in to shore with them during the night and unload it in different creeks and any place they could sneak into to get rid of the load. But if they were caught, they would just throw the load over and run away. Leave the liquor and save the boat.

Q: Who were they being caught by?

Mr. Walker: Mostly around here it would be the Coast Guard. And they weren't fully equipped to fight it, and so, a lot of it got by without anything done.

Q: What would happen if they were caught with a boat full of liquor?

Mr. Walker: They would seize the boat and I don't know what sentence the men would get. We had one case of a boat coming ashore on Orleans bathing beach, loaded with alcohol. The men on that boat were sick with colds and so they ran the boat ashore and started a fire. That was

a boatload of pure alcohol in five-gallon cans. My father went down to be sure that it was burnt and not used otherwise. (LAUGHTER) A whole boat load was burned up.

Q: Would they sell this liquor to private people, was that the idea?

Mr. Walker: There would be certain ones that were in the ring and they knew it was coming ashore and they would be there to get it and then they'd transport it. From here they might transport it from here way to Boston that night or they might store it in some building in town, keep it under cover for a day or two and then move it the next night.

Q: You said, "Ship it to Boston," was this being done off the Boston coast too?

Mr. Walker: Oh yes, it was done everywhere. It was such a large scale, it couldn't be controlled really. They had fast boats and then in the end of it they got so that they had machine guns and they really were dangerous people to contend with.

Q: Can you tell me about the beach patrol during World War II?

Mr. Walker: Well, we had what we called the Coast Guard

Auxiliary and the men volunteered their services to help out the Coast Guard. We would go over and take the duty for one night. Two men would go and patrol the Bay side of the Cape from --- I used to go to Dennis, and walk from Dennis down towards off Nobscusset, three miles along the beach looking for saboteurs and then we would go---

Q: Where is Nobscusset?

Mr. Walker: Nobscussett. It's in Dennis at the point of the main route. Then we would go to Nauset Station, Nauset Guard Station and patrol the beach for the regular men that were on duty there and give them a night off. We were just looking for saboteurs that might land from submarines and so forth. Along here I don't know any cases of anyone running into any of that. They did in the Carolina coast. I believe they picked up people that came ashore. Nothing happened here.

Q: How many people were walking the beach when you volunteered services?

Mr. Walker: There was someone on the beach all the time. There would be one man--one man would walk north to meet the man coming from the other station, punch timeclocks. Then when he came to the next station, one man would walk south three miles and meet the man from

that station. So they were patrolling back and forth on the beach all during the night looking for wrecks.

Q: How many years was thin in affect? The volunteers?

Mr. Walker: I think two years, three years.

Q: Did you have uniforms?

Mr. Walker: Oh yes, yes. We were equipped with uniforms. Summer uniforms, winter uniforms. Heavy coats. Shoes. Just as though we were in the service.

Q: Did you have any weapons?

Mr. Walker: No, no weapons were issued to us. We were given weapons when we went on patrol tjat belonged to the Coast Guard Station, but we weren't issued any. They were very liberal, right down to the underwear, with the uniforms.

Q: You had blackouts during World War II?

Mr. Walker: Yes they had blackouts. All the windows were covered and no light was supposed to be shown and they'd have test runs. They'd start at sundown. There was a little siren in town and that was our warning that an air raid or something, and we would go out in certain districts. We were appointed to make sure all lights were out in all the houses and no light was being shown any-

where. And sometimes they would send a vehicle from down the Cape up the Cape and we were given bags of flour to throw at that vehicle if it went by us, if we saw it. That was running without lights too. Just very dim lights. We were supposed to see if we could stop it, I suppose, by throwing a bag of flour at it. (LAUGHTER) They had a lot crazy things happening.

Q: Like what happened? What would happen?

Mr. Walker: It was a--just to see if you were on alert, that's all, if it got by you without being hit. But I know the main warden would go around town blowing the siren in a car and all the lights would be out. And then the whistle would blow which meant the raid was over. We were supposed to be well prepared if anything did happen, but I don't know if anything had, I don't know what have happened then.

Q: Did you have training for this?

Mr. Walker: No, no training, just volunteer work.

Q: Did you have someone that was in charge, like the captain?

Mr. Walker: Yes, there was. I'm not sure who was in charge of that the Civil Defense. When the trains came down, if the screen in the smokestack had a hole in

it or something, when they shovel the coal on the engine, sparks would come out and start wood fires all along the railroad. They'd be all the way down the Cape. The main ones would be the ones when the evening train went down, because that's when it would show up the most. They'd show up in the night. Big fires burned the woods and some of the fires would go from the railroad right to the water in the Town Cove. Everyone would turn out to fight fires. We got paid thirty-five cents an hour then to fight the fires.

Q: How did you fight them?

Mr. Walker: With shovels. If it was really bad the men would get the horse and plows and plow furrows around the outside of the fire. We had some real good ones. Didn't make much difference. Then the next year you'd have a beautiful blackberry crop. They claimed that up in Falmouth they always burned the woods over so there would be big blueberry crops. Out of the fire you would get a lot of blueberries.

Q: Did you find that to be true?

Mr. Walker: I think that it was true. It was nothing but scrub land. I don't know of any houses that were being burned down, just fields and what not.

Q: You mentioned that also you used to shovel snow?

Mr. Walker: Yes. There was no snowplows. Every man turned out and shoveled snow to clear the roads. The first snowplow I think came after World War I, when they sent some of the old Army trucks down here. They didn't amount to much, because they would get stuck in the first big snow drift. Some of them were real big drifts. Wome of them would be three, four hundred feet long and over five feet deep.

Q: How long would it take you to clear the main roads?

Mr. Walker: We would be shoveling two days, three days and then they wouldn't be all but one, two automobiles. We didn't clear the roads.

Q: Can you tell me about the first automobile you remember?

Mr. Walker: The first automobile that I remember was my uncle had an old Maxwell single two seater. I couldn't have been more than seven or eight years old when I got my first ride in it. We went down through Eastham and the front wheel came off, the wheel rolling ahead of us and the car didn't even tip down any. The way it was built evidently it wouldn't tip down on three wheels. My first real ride I went to Onset with my uncle in his Ford and I saw my first street car.

Q: And how old were you then?

Mr. Walker: Oh, I must have been about twelve. The nearest street car was ---

Q: Pardon me.

Mr. Walker: In Onset, was the nearest place to see a street car.

Q: And what was that first impression?

Mr. Walker: I can't tell you really. It doesn't seem as though it struck me as very---but it was an all day ride.

Q: Did you get a ride on it?

Mr. Walker: No.

Q: Did you go especially to see the street car?

Mr. Walker: Yes.

Q: Did people do that, drive that far away just to see a street car?

Mr. Walker: He was driving a lot. It seems as though he was on the road a lot, back and forth quite often. He used to take a load of fish---I don't know when my first trip to Boston.

Q: What were the roads like then?

Mr. Walker: It seems as though they were all right.